



## Department of Planning and Community Development

### Policy # Plumb – 05-01

#### Floor Drains in Parking Garages

Floor Drains installed in the floor of parking garages collect effluent from vehicles and the atmosphere that must be discharged to an approved site. Since there are many chemicals that affect both the sanitary sewer system and the storm water drainage system, a question has arisen regarding which system should receive effluent from floor drains in this case. Section 701.2 of the International Plumbing Code 2000 edition states in part:

***701.2 Sewer required.***

***Every building in which plumbing fixtures are installed and all premises having drainage piping shall be connected to a public sewer, where available, or an approved private sewage disposal system in accordance with the International Private Sewage Disposal Code.***

Most runoff in open parking garages is wind-blown rain and comes through the openings in the exterior walls. Runoff from hose bibs is minimal. City regulations for sediment removal are dictated by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Because of this, floor drains in open parking garages are to be connected to the Storm Water Sewer System and not the Sanitary Sewer System.

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#### Commentary

Because of the nature of effluent in parking garages (gasoline, oil, debris) floor drains would contaminate the sanitary sewer system. Neither the sanitary sewer collection nor treatment systems have the capacity to accept storm water runoff of any kind. Such connections are prevented by City of Norfolk Code. Norfolk is currently under Consent Order with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. The Consent Order requires the City of Norfolk to make improvements to the system that reduces overflows. A significant cause of overflows is infiltration/inflow (storm water getting into the sewer pipes) and we are spending millions annually to keep this storm water out of our system.